

COVER SHEET FOR AMENDMENT OF POST-TRAVEL SUBMISSION

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Instructions: Use this form as a cover sheet for any paperwork you may need to submit to the **Office of Public Records** in order to make your Privately Sponsored Post-Travel Submission complete in accordance with Rule 35. **Only complete this form if you need to submit an amendment to a post-travel filing you have already submitted.**

SUBMIT DIRECTLY TO THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC RECORDS IN 232 HART BUILDING

Name of Traveler: Alex Sachtjen

Employing Office/Committee: U.S. Senator John Thune

Travel Expenses Paid by (List all sources): The Foundation for Rural Service

Travel Date(s): August 17-20, 2021

Description/Title of Attached Forms: Updated Private Travel Sponsor Certification Form
and addendum.

Purpose of Amendment (describe the reason for amending original submission): My original submission
did included an earlier version of the Private Sponsort Travel Certification Form, but
not the final version. This amendment provides the final version of the Private Travel
Certification Form along with the addendum to that form.

9/13/2021

(Date)


(Signature of Traveler)

PRIVATE SPONSOR TRAVEL CERTIFICATION FORM

This form must be completed by any private entity offering to provide travel or reimbursement for travel to Senate Members, officers, or employees (Senate Rule 35, clause 2). Each sponsor of a fact-finding trip must sign the completed form. The trip sponsor(s) must provide a copy of the completed form to each invited Senate traveler, who will then forward it to the Ethics Committee with any other required materials. The trip sponsor(s) should **NOT** submit the form directly to the Ethics Committee. Please consult the accompanying instructions for more detailed definitions and other key information.

The Senate Member, officer, or employee **MUST** also provide a copy of this form, along with the appropriate travel authorization and reimbursement form, to the Office of Public Records (OPR), Room 232 of the Hart Building, within thirty (30) days after the travel is completed.

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1. Sponsor(s) of the trip (please list all sponsors): Foundation for Rural Service (FRS)

 2. Description of the trip: Travel throughout Montana to visit local broadband providers and highlight the geographic and financial challenges of providing rural broadband.

 3. Dates of travel: August 17-20, 2021

 4. Place of travel: Great Falls, Havre, Box Elder, Carter, and Stanford, Montana (flying in and out of Great Falls)

 5. Name and title of Senate invitees: All Senate telecom staffers (list attached)

 6. I *certify* that the trip fits one of the following categories:
 - ☒ (A) The sponsor(s) are not registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal **and** do not retain or employ registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal **and** no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee *at any point* throughout the trip.
 - OR -**
 - ☐ (B) The sponsor or sponsors are not registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal, but retain or employ one or more registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal and the trip meets the requirements of Senate Rule 35.2(a)(2)(A)(i) or (ii) (*see question 9*).

 7. ☒ I *certify* that the trip will not be financed in any part by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal.
 - AND -**
 - ☒ I *certify* that the sponsor or sponsors will not accept funds or in-kind contributions earmarked directly or indirectly for the purpose of financing this specific trip from a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal or from a private entity that retains or employs one or more registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal.

 8. I *certify* that:
 - ☒ The trip will not in any part be planned, organized, requested, or arranged by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal except for *de minimis* lobbyist involvement.
 - AND -**
 - ☒ The traveler will not be accompanied on the trip by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal except as provided for by Committee regulations relating to lobbyist accompaniment (*see question 9*).

9. **USE ONLY IF YOU CHECKED QUESTION 6(B)**

I *certify* that if the sponsor or sponsors retain or employ one or more registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal, one of the following scenarios applies:

- ☐ (A) The trip is for attendance or participation in a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee *on any segment* of the trip.

– OR –

- ☐ (B) The trip is for attendance or participation in a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee *on any segment* of the trip (see questions 6 and 10).

– OR –

- ☐ (C) The trip is being sponsored only by an organization or organizations designated under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee *at any point* throughout the trip.

10. **USE ONLY IF YOU CHECKED QUESTION 9(B)**

If the trip includes two overnight stays, please explain why the second night is practically required for Senate invitees to participate in the travel:

11. ☒ An itinerary for the trip is attached to this form. I *certify* that the attached itinerary is a detailed (hour-by-hour), complete, and final itinerary for the trip.

12. Briefly describe the role of each sponsor in organizing and conducting the trip:

See Attachment A for response

13. Briefly describe the stated mission of each sponsor and how the purpose of the trip relates to that mission:

The mission of FRS is to sustain and enhance the quality of life in America by advancing an understanding of rural issues. FRS educates the public on the benefits of rural broadband for health, education, agriculture and other purposes. The trip will showcase the challenges of providing broadband to rural communities.

14. Briefly describe each sponsor's prior history of sponsoring congressional trips:

FRS has sponsored similar trips for congressional staff to Montana (2013), upstate New York (2014), Kentucky/Tennessee (2015), Wyoming (2016), South Dakota (2017) and West Virginia (2018).

15. Briefly describe the educational activities performed by each sponsor (other than sponsoring congressional trips):

FRS produces white papers and economic studies on rural broadband issues, hosts an annual youth tour to Washington, DC for rural high school students, sponsors college scholarship and community grant programs, and offers educational events such as Rural Broadband 101 for Hill staff and third parties.

16. Total Expenses for Each Participant:

	Transportation Expenses	Lodging Expenses	Meal Expenses	Other Expenses
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good Faith estimate <input type="checkbox"/> Actual Amounts	\$942 (\$692 for one-way flight and \$250 for bus)	\$288 (\$96 x 3 nights)	\$192 (2 partial days @ \$41.25 and 2 full days at \$55)	none

17. State whether a) the trip involves an event that is arranged or organized *without regard* to congressional participation or b) the trip involves an event that is arranged or organized *specifically with regard* to congressional participation:

b.) This trip involves an event that is arranged or organized specifically with regard to congressional participation.

18. Reason for selecting the location of the event or trip

Rural Montana highlights a wide variety of geographic challenges reflecting those faced by other rural areas of the U.S.

19. Name and location of hotel or other lodging facility:

Day 1: Comfort Inn & Suites -- Airport in Great Falls, MT; Day 2: Best Western Plus Havre Inn & Suites in Havre, MT; Day 3: Comfort Inn & Suites -- Airport in Great Falls, MT

20. Reason(s) for selecting hotel or other lodging facility:

Montana and Yellowstone National Park are both very popular tourist destinations in August. The selected hotels are of good quality and meet the per diem rate requirements.

21. Describe how the daily expenses for lodging, meals, and other expenses provided to trip participants compares to the maximum per diem rates for official Federal Government travel:

The lodging selected equals the federal per diem rate of \$96 for this geographic area (without taxes).

The hotels offer free breakfast and the remainder of meals are equal to per diem rates.

22. Describe the type and class of transportation being provided. Indicate whether coach, business-class or first class transportation will be provided. If first-class fare is being provided, please explain why first-class travel is necessary:

Flights will be coach round-trip from Washington, DC to Montana; transportation within the state will be via chartered coach bus.

23. ☒ I represent that the travel expenses that will be paid for or reimbursed to Senate invitees do not include expenditures for recreational activities, alcohol, or entertainment (other than entertainment provided to all attendees as an integral part of the event, as permissible under Senate Rule 35).

24. List any entertainment that will be provided to, paid for, or reimbursed to Senate invitees and explain why the entertainment is an integral part of the event:

none

25. I hereby *certify* that the information contained herein is true, complete and correct. (For trips involving more than one sponsor, you *must* include a completed signature page for each additional sponsor):

Signature of Travel Sponsor: Pamela Becker

Name and Title: Pamela Becker, Executive Director

Name of Organization: Foundation for Rural Service

Address: 4121 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1000, Arlington, VA 22203

Telephone Number: office: 703-351-2044; mobile 703-346-0817

Fax Number: _____

E-mail Address: pbecker@frs.org

FINAL

FOUNDATION FOR
RURAL SERVICE

FRS Congressional Broadband Tour – Montana

August 17-20, 2021

The Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) is a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to enhancing quality of life in America by promoting a better understanding of rural issues. The vision of FRS is to harness the power of the rural communications industry to enrich lives in America.

The purpose of this trip is to educate Hill staff on the geographic and financial challenges of providing robust broadband service to remote rural areas, as well as to highlight the role rural telecom companies play in providing these essential services that support education, commercial activity, agriculture, health, and public safety. Attendees will visit with a range of small, rural telecommunications companies in Montana as well as companies that provide essential services to these companies. The group will also visit with rural community leaders and discuss ways in which the state has been enhanced by broadband applications. Drive times through Montana will give FRS staff an opportunity to provide educational sessions on the bus, as well as illustrate the difficulty of serving “last mile” areas in a highly rural state.

Per the Ethics rules, no registered lobbyists will attend this trip. All expenses will be paid in full by the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) and will be subject to the daily per diem allowances for Senate and House employees—in other words, all meals, lodging and transportation for staffers will be covered by FRS within these allowance rates.

ITINERARY

Tuesday, August 17, 2021

7:05 a.m.-2:23 p.m. Fly from Washington, DC Delta Airlines #457/858/4298 via Atlanta and Salt Lake City; Arrive Great Falls International Airport, Great Falls, MT

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALEX SACHTJEN, JOHN LIN, RACHEL LANG AND OLIVIA TRUSTY were all on flights that were significantly delayed and didn't arrive in Great Falls, MT until 10:45 p.m. on August 17. They went straight to the hotel from the airport.

10:45 p.m. Bus to Hotel for check in.

Comfort Inn & Suites Market – Airport
1801 Market Drive
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-455-1000

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

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|--------------------|---|
| 8:00 a.m. | Breakfast at hotel |
| 9:00 – 9:10 a.m. | Board bus and drive to Vision Net (1309 NW Bypass, Great Falls, MT 59404). |
| 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. | <p>At Vision Net, the group will receive an industry overview, a history of broadband funding mechanisms in the state such as the Universal Service Fund, and how funding programs and policies affect the telecommunications providers of Montana.</p> <p>The group will tour Vision Net's network operations center (NOC) and learn about the advanced managed services provided by Vision Net to enterprise customers around the nation. Vision Net, founded by rural Montana telecommunications providers as an Internet managed services consortium, is a telecommunication solutions company with offices in Great Falls, Billings, Helena and Missoula. The company's suite of products and services includes: statewide 911 network management; broadband network transport; a range of Internet access services; design and management of customized wide area network (WAN) solutions including SD-WAN, a full line of end point and network security products, and Unified Communications/Hosted VoIP; and network device monitoring.</p> <p>Presentation and tour provided by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geoff Feiss, General Manager, Montana Telecommunications Association • Corey Jensen, CEO, Vision Net • Gary Evans, COO, Vision Net |
| 10:15 – 10:30 a.m. | Board bus and ride to Benefis Health System/Sletten Cancer Center (1117 29th St S, Great Falls, MT 59405) |
| 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. | <p>Tour and Visit Benefis Health System, a nonprofit independent health care system based in the city of Great Falls and Montana's largest hospital. Benefis serves about 164,000 residents in a vast, 13-county region and operates REACH-MT, a regional telemedicine network providing health services to remotely located health care providers throughout northcentral Montana. At Benefis, executives will provide an overview of how Benefis Health System uses telehealth capabilities for their patients. Presenters will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jody Haines, Director of Telemedicine at Billings Clinic and President, Montana Telehealth Association |

- Gene Koppy, Telehealth Network Administrator
- Christian Balcer, Manager of Telemedicine and Business Development

11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Board bus and travel to the Logan Good Farm (573 Black Horse Lake Road, Carter, MT). Eat box lunch on bus while traveling.

12:15 – 1:15 p.m. Tour the large farming operation and see “Smart Ag” applications in use on the farm. Former Boeing engineer and fourth generation farmer Logan Good will highlight the use of broadband technologies and advanced smart ag equipment in optimizing efficiencies in large-scale farming operations and discuss federal/state ag policy and economics.

1:30 – 2:50 p.m. Board bus and travel to Triangle Communications (2121 US-2 Havre, MT 59501)

On the bus Pam Becker and Geoff Feiss will review the day’s visits and answer questions from staffers. Pam and Geoff will discuss the unique west vs. east geography of the state and how these differences affect the state’s economy and resources.

3:00 – 5:00 p.m. Visit and tour of Triangle Communications and Hill County Rural Electric Cooperative to learn about the challenges rural broadband and electricity cooperatives face in meeting customers’ demand and exceeding expectations. The visit will include a “hands-on” demonstration of fiber infrastructure construction equipment and assets. See first-hand construction equipment, fiber trenchers, fiber cable and other material involved in deploying fiber infrastructure.

Triangle Telephone Cooperative (TTC) is a company owned by its members. The cooperative was incorporated on March 24, 1953 in Havre, Montana by rural residents of Central Montana. The company provides telecommunications services including Broadband Internet, local, long distance and mobile telephone service to residents of Central Montana. Their 17,000+ subscribers live in parts of 16 counties from the Canadian to the Wyoming borders covering 23,000 square miles. Hill County Electric Cooperative was started by rural residents of Hill County who wanted to enjoy the benefits of electricity. HCE was incorporated in 1945 and the first electric services were provided to members in the spring of 1947. The group will also hear from the manager of Triangle Wireless who will discuss the challenges of providing wireless services in rural Montana, as well as issues like 5G and supply chain security.

Speakers include:

- Craig Gates, CEO, Triangle Communications and Hill County Electric Cooperative
- Robert Pleninger, Manager of Telephone Engineering & Operations, Triangle Communications and Hill County Electric Cooperative
- Tim Nixdorf, Manager, Triangle Wireless
- Bethany Chinadle, VP of Customer Operations, Triangle Communications

5:00 – 5:10 p.m.

Bus to hotel for check in

Best Western Plus Havre Inn & Suites

1425 Highway 2 NW
Havre, MT 59501
406-265-2888

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Walk to dinner at Murphy's (1465 US-2 A, Havre). The group will be joined by executives from Triangle Communications who will answer questions about the earlier tour and presentation and provide their perspective on the broadband industry. Guests will be:

- Craig Gates, CEO, Triangle Communications and Hill County Electric Cooperative
- Bethany Chinadle, VP of VP of Customer Operations, Triangle Communications

Thursday, August 19, 2021

8:00 a.m.

Breakfast at hotel

9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Board bus and travel to Northern Telephone Cooperative Central Office (Highway 215 in Kevin, MT)

During ride Geoff Feiss will lead discussion about fiber construction challenges in rural areas and what options are possible for telecommunications companies.

Aimee Dietrich, General Manager and Justin Gallup, Plant Network Engineer, will brief the group on Northern Telephone Cooperative's service territory, history, operations, etc. and current fiber construction in Kevin. Northern Telephone Cooperative provides basic and advanced telecommunications

services and broadband Internet access to 1,100+ homes and businesses whose locations are spread across more than 3,200 square miles in north central Montana. Tour fiber construction site at Kevin, MT.

11:30 – 12:30 p.m.

Board bus and travel to Glacier Park Lodge (499 MT-49, East Glacier Park Village, MT 59434)

12:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Lunch and discussion with Mike Sheard, General Manager of Siyeh Communications and George Heavy Runner, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Siyeh Corporation. Siyeh Communications (SiyCom) is a telecommunications/broadband utility chartered by the Siyeh Corporation, a federally chartered corporation of the Blackfeet Tribe.

Discussion will include the Blackfeet Nation's business operations, including Siyeh Corporation, and SiyCom, Montana's newest telecommunications carrier, established January 2021. Mike Sheard will discuss various Tribal telecommunications programs, including SiyCom's use of 2.5 GHz spectrum and plans for using other federal Tribal infrastructure support programs.

3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Board bus for return to Great Falls. During ride Geoff Feiss will lead discussion and answer questions about the unique aspects of providing telecommunications service to reservations.

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Dinner at the Cattlemen's Cut Steakhouse (1400 Market Place Drive) a Great Falls tradition. Pam Becker and Geoff Feiss will recap the trip, lead Q&A and survey the group for comments on content and logistics of the trip.

7:30 p.m.

Check in to hotel

Comfort Inn & Suites Market – Airport
1801 Market Drive
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-455-1000

Friday, August 20, 2021

7:00 a.m. – 3:56 p.m.

Fly from Great Falls to Washington, DC, Delta #4292/760 via Salt Lake City